

REMARKS

1. Claims 1 and 14 have been amended to delete the term "about" in relation to the percentage of the internal diameter relative to the outside diameter of the shaped support material. Claims 7 and 8 have also been amended to improve consistency with currently amended Claim 1.

2. Claims 1-12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson (US 4,532,231 hereinafter the '231 reference) in view of Liu et al (6,511,938 hereinafter the '938 reference). A declaration under 37 C.F.R. 1.132 is submitted herewith this amendment which traverses this rejection. Figure 1 of the declaration shows that the amounts in question for internal diameters of 30 % and 37 % of the outside diameter are not so close that it is prima facie obvious that one skilled in the art would have expected them to have the same properties. Based on the Ergun correlation predictions of Figure 1, one skilled in the art would have expected different properties. Further, points 6-10 of the declaration show the invention claimed in the subject patent application provides an unexpected balance of property advantages, in particular improved activity and/or selectivity along with good and acceptable pressure drop in the reactor. In view of these arguments, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

3. Claims 13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Liu et al. as applied to claims 1-12 and 14 above, and further in view of Thorsteinson et al. (US 5,187,140 hereinafter the '140 reference). This rejection is respectfully traversed. The arguments discussed hereinbefore equally apply to Johnson in view of Liu et al. and further in view of Thorsteinson et al.; therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

The rejections having been overcome, allowance of Claims 1-15 of the present application is respectfully requested. If the Examiner would like to discuss this case with Applicant's attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact Richard Lemuth at the phone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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